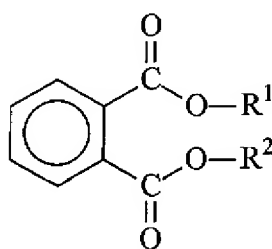


### Amendment to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace the prior version in the application.

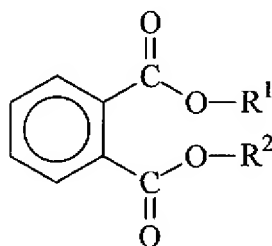
#### Claims

1. (currently amended) Process for the treatment of a metal hydrotreating catalyst in oxide form, characterized in that it consists in bringing said hydrotreating catalyst into contact, in the absence of a ~~sulphur compound~~ sulphidation agent, with at least one compound chosen from orthophthalic acid, phthalic anhydride or the ester of general formula (I):



in which the symbols  $R^1$  and  $R^2$ , which are identical or different, each represent an alkyl (linear or branched), cycloalkyl, aryl, alkylaryl or arylalkyl radical, said radical comprising from 1 to 18 carbon atoms and optionally one or more heteroatoms.

2. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that the compound brought into contact with the catalyst is an ester of general formula (I):



in which the symbols  $R^1$  and  $R^2$ , which are identical or different, each represent an alkyl (linear or branched), cycloalkyl, aryl, alkylaryl or arylalkyl radical, said radical comprising from 1 to 18 carbon atoms and optionally one or more heteroatoms.

3. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  represent identical alkyl radicals comprising from 1 to 8 carbon atoms.

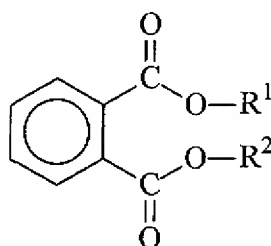
4. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that the ester of formula (I) is diethyl orthophthalate.

5. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that the hydrotreating catalyst comprises molybdenum, tungsten, nickel and/or cobalt oxides, deposited on a porous inorganic support.

6. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that the ester of formula (I) is dissolved in toluene.

7. (currently amended) Process for the sulphidation of a metal hydrotreating catalyst in oxide form, comprising:

-a) contacting a hydrotreating catalyst, in the absence of a ~~sulphur compound~~ sulphidation agent, with at least one compound chosen from orthophthalic acid, phthalic anhydride or the ester of general formula (I):



in which the symbols  $R^1$  and  $R^2$ , which are identical or different, each represent an alkyl (linear or branched), cycloalkyl, aryl, alkylaryl or arylalkyl radical, said radical comprising from 1 to 18 carbon atoms and optionally one or more heteroatoms: followed by

-b) contacting the catalyst thus treated with a sulphidation agent, and thereafter or simultaneously  
-c) contacting the catalyst thus treated with hydrogen.

8. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 7, characterized in that the sulphidation agent is a hydrocarbonaceous feedstock to be hydrodesulphurized, optionally with the addition of a sulphur compound.

9. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 7, characterized in that said sulphidation agent is dimethyl disulphide in a proportion of 0.5 to 5%, in a hydrocarbonaceous feedstock.

10. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 7, characterized in that stage a) is carried out in a mixing device and stage b) and stage c) are carried out simultaneously in an industrial hydrotreating reactor.

11. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 7, characterized in that stage a) and stage b) are carried out in two mixing devices which are identical or different and stage c) is carried out in an industrial hydrotreating reactor.

12. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 7, characterized in that stage a) is carried out in an industrial hydrotreating reactor followed by stage b) and c) in the same industrial hydrotreating reactor.

13. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 2, characterized in that  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  represent identical alkyl radicals comprising from 1 to 8 carbon atoms.

14. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 8 characterized in that said sulphur compound is selected from carbon disulphide, an organic sulphide, disulphide or polysulphide, a thiophene compound or a sulphur-comprising olefin.

15. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 9 characterized in that said dimethyl disulphide is in a proportion of 1 to 3%, in a hydrocarbonaceous feedstock.